



A Curious Riddle.

The last number of the Historical Magazine has the following ingenious piece of poetry, which one of its correspondents vouches for having been translated in Philadelphia during the occupation of the British in the war of the Revolution. Its author is unknown. Its peculiarity consists in the manner in which it may be read in three different ways, viz.:

(1.) Let the whole be read in the order in which it is written; (2.) read the lines downwards on the left of each comma in every line; and (3.) in the same manner on the right of each comma. By the first reading it will be observed that the revolutionary cause is depreciated, and lauded by the others:

Hark! hark! the trumpet sounds, the din of war's alarms O'er seas and solid grounds, doth call us to arms: Who for King George doth stand, their honors soon will shine; Their ruin is at hand, who with the Congress join.

The acts of Parliament, in them, I much delight; I hate their cursed intent, who for the Congress fight. The Tories of the day, they are my daily toast; They soon will speak away, who Independence boast.

Who non-resistance hold, they have my hand and heart; May they for slaves be sold, who act a Whiggish part.

Old Mansfield, North, and Bute, may daily blessings pour; Confusion and dispute, on Congress evermore; To North—that British lord—may honor still be done.

I wish a block or cord, to General Washington.

JOHN OGDEN'S LAST BET.

John Ogden had contracted a very bad habit—a dangerous and a sinful habit. Had any one suggested to him a game of cards to be played for money, he would not have listened; and yet he was growing to be a gambler, notwithstanding. His sin was that of betting, and it had so grown upon him that he would bet upon the result of things most trivial or most grave. He was a young man, not more than eight-and-twenty, with a wife and two children—a wife true and loving, and children bright and good. And John was a good, kind husband, and an even-tempered, indulgent father. He was a book-keeper in a mercantile house, upon a salary more than sufficient for all his proper wants.

John Ogden's betting had come to be a matter of emphasis and determination. The habit had so fastened itself upon him that he could bet off-hand, and pay a loss, or take a winning, as a matter of course.

"Susan," he said, one evening, with radiant face, "I have won fifty dollars to-day."

"How?" asked the wife, with a shadow upon her face.

"I bet fifty dollars that Popkins would be elected over Shumway, and Popkins was elected, handily, wasn't it?"

"With Charles Ashcroft?"

"And you took his fifty dollars?"

"Certainly, why shouldn't I? He fairly lost."

"And you, I suppose, fairly won."

"Of course I did."

"And do you think Charles Ashcroft was able to bear the loss?"

"That isn't my look-out."

"I am sorry, John. I wish you would put away that habit. Only evil can come of it."

"Pshaw!"

"Evil has already come, John. Your heart is growing callous and hard. Times was when you could not have taken fifty dollars from a poor and needy family without a feeling of shame and compunction."

"Hold on, Susan! I don't want another lecture. I know what I am up to. You don't know so much of the world as I do."

And with this, John Ogden took his hat and went out—went out like a coward, knowing that if he entered into argument with his wife, she would twist him into a labyrinth from which he could only escape by an angry bolt.

Half an hour later Peter Cartwright came in. He was a year or two older than John, and was Susan's cousin, only a cousin by blood, but as they had been brought up from early childhood together they were like brother and sister in life and love. Peter sat down, and chatted awhile, and found his cousin got so cheerful as usual.

"You are not well, Susan?"

"I am well in body, Peter, but sore at heart."

"What is it?"

"I fear not to speak to you freely. I am worrying about John. His habit of betting is taking deeper and deeper root. To-day he has won fifty dollars from Charles Ashcroft on the result of an election. Last week he won forty dollars on the race-course. I know his temperament. He is headstrong and impulsive. Can you not see the danger?"

"I wish you could influence him, Peter."

"I wish I could; but I fear he would not listen."

Cartwright took out his watch, and said he must be going. He had left a friend at the Ashton House, and must go back home.

"I came down," he added, "to get John to call up with him. You remember Frank Powers?"

"Certainly," said Susan, with a brightening eye. "I was reading of him in the paper last night. He has been made a colonel."

"Yes," returned Peter, "and has come home minus an arm, lost at Antietam."

Peter had arisen, and got as far as the door, when he stopped and turned.

"Susan," he said, "I have an idea. Isn't John saving up money with which to pay off the mortgage on his house?"

"Yes. He has almost enough. The mortgage is eleven hundred and fifty dollars, and he has a thousand of it in bank."

"Don't say anything to him that I have been here, and say nothing about Colonel Powers."

"But—"

"Trust me, Susan. I think I see a way to give him a lesson. Hold your peace, and await the result."

On the following day Peter Cartwright met John Ogden in the store, and informed him of the arrival of Col. Powers.

"And he wants to see you, old fellow. Will you go up with me this evening?"

"Certainly I will," replied John, gladly. "How is he?"

"Comfortable, considering. He has had a hard time of it, though. You know he had lost an arm?"

"I heard of his being wounded at Antietam. And so the arm had to come off."

"Which—"

"Excuse me, John. I have an appointment to keep at the bank. I will call for you this evening."

"All right. I'll be ready."

And in the evening Peter called, and together the two went to the hotel. They found Col. Powers in his private room, seated in a big easy-chair, and looking somewhat pale and worn.

"Frank, my dear fellow, how are you?" cried John, advancing.

"John, old boy, I am glad to see you. You'll excuse me not rising. I am pretty well, but not so strong as I have been."

"Keep your seat, Frank. I am glad to see you back alive; and I'm sure you'll pick up in time."

The empty coat-sleeve, dangling over the arm of the chair, was eloquent, and John's eyes moistened as he fixed his gaze upon it.

And yet the conversation flowed pleasantly after a time. The colonel had much to tell, and his hearers were willing to listen.

John arose to depart first. He had told his wife that he should not be out late. Cartwright would remain a while longer.

On the day following this visit Peter and John met in the street close by the bank where the latter had come to deposit for his employers. Peter had evidently been waiting and watching.

"Are you going to lunch, John?"

"Yes. Will you come with me?"

"I will if you'll lunch with me."

The lunch-room was near at hand, and while they ate they talked of Frank Powers and his adventures, and also of his mishaps.

"He ought to be thankful, though," remarked Peter, "that it was his left arm that was taken instead of his right."

John Ogden looked up curiously.

"Eh, Peter?"

"I say, Frank ought to be thankful that they took his left arm instead of his right."

"You mean that for a joke?"

"How?"

"Why—Frank has lost his right arm, to be sure."

"You are mistaken, John. His right arm is safe and sound. It is the left arm that is gone."

"Peter, are you in earnest? Do you mean it?"

"Are you daft, John? Of course, I mean it."

"Do you mean to say that Frank Powers has lost his left arm, and that his right arm is intact?"

"I do say exactly so."

John pressed the ends of his fingers upon his brow, and called up to mind the picture as he had seen it on the previous evening. He remembered just where the empty sleeve had dangled, and he remembered that the opposite arm had been whole.

"Peter," he finally said, slowly and emphatically, "Frank Powers has lost his right arm!"

"You are mistaken, John."

"Do you think so?"

"I know you are mistaken."

"I'd like to bet you something on it," said John, with a decisive gesture.

"I'll bet you anything you like, my dear fellow, so that you make it an object."

"And I'll bet anything you like," John answered.

"You ain't sure enough to bet a thousand dollars?"

"A thousand?"

"I thought it would shake your confidence in yourself," nodded Peter, with a smile.

John Ogden started to his feet, and brought his hand down with a slap upon the table.

"Dare you bet a thousand dollars, Peter?"

"Yes."

"You'll lose it."

"I am able."

"I'll go it! The bet is made. Will you hold it here while I go and get the money?"

"Yes."

John hurried away to the bank and drew out his thousand dollars, and with it returned to the lunch-room flushed and excited. A mutual friend was called, to whom the case was plainly stated.

"I bet a thousand dollars," said John, "that Colonel Frank Powers has lost his right arm, and that his left arm is whole."

"And I," said Peter, "bet the same amount that Colonel Frank Powers has lost his left arm, and that his right arm is whole."

The money was deposited in the hands of the mutual friend, with instructions that he should pay it to the winner. And then they agreed that the three should go at once to the hotel and settle the matter.

Twelve months before this time John Ogden would not have bet so large a sum under any circumstances; but the habit had indeed grown upon him.

Arrived at the hotel the three were admitted to the colonel's presence.

"Ah, boys, I am glad to see you. I am feeling much better to-day. John, old fellow, I can get up for you now. How are you?"

And Colonel Frank Powers arose, and extended his hand—his maimed hand—and when John felt its grasp he found it true flesh and blood, warm and pulsating. He staggered back with a groan.

"You will excuse us, Colonel," said Peter; "but John and I had a little dispute. He thought you had lost your right arm."

"O, no," returned Powers, smiling. "Thank Heaven, my right arm is spared me,—extending his good right hand,—"but this poor stump is all that is left of it fellow," pointing to the empty sleeve that hung by his left side.

John got away as soon as he could. In the lower hall the two thousand dollars was paid over to Peter Cartwright.

"I am sorry you lost your money, John," the latter said, as he put the bank-notes into his pocket-book, "but I think I won it fairly."

"It's all right, Peter." And John tried to smile as he said so, but he could not do it.

A miserable man was John Ogden that afternoon; and more miserable was he when he went to his home in the evening. His wife asked him what was the matter, but he would not tell her; and when she pressed him he was angry. He could not—he dared not—tell her that the savings of years—the money that was to have paid for their precious home—had been swept away in a moment—swept away by an act of his own sin and folly.

That night he slept not a wink. On the following morning, pale and shivering, he started to go away from his home without his breakfast. On his door-step he was met by Cartwright's clerk, who handed him a sealed packet.

"It is from Mr. Cartwright, sir."

"Do you wait for an answer?"

"No, sir."

John went back into his house, and broke the seal, and opened the packet. He found within one thousand dollars in crisp bank-notes and a folded letter. He opened the letter, and read:

DEAR JOHN.—With this I send you back your thousand dollars. I won the money as honestly as gambling bets are often won, and yet I did not win it fairly. Frank and I decided you on purpose. On your first visit his right arm was hidden beneath his coat, and his wooden left arm was strapped on. As he did not rise from his chair the deception was perfect. You found him on your second visit as he really was, only the wooden arm had been laid aside.

"Forgive me, John, and believe that I had an aim in this, which God grant may be fulfilled." FRANK.

S. J. should like that this subject should never be referred to between us. Please me in this, won't you? "P."

"Dear John, what is it?"

Susan had come in, and as she spoke she put her arm around her husband's neck and kissed him. He returned the kiss.

"Not now, Susan," he said huskily. "I will tell you some time."

"But you will come and eat some breakfast?"

"If you won't ask any more questions—yes."

The blow had been a severe one, and the effects of the shock did not quickly pass away. But John Ogden revived in time; and when he told to his wife the secret of his trouble on that unhappy night, he was prepared to give her a great and lasting joy by adding that he had made his last bet.—Ledger.

His Reasons.

Soon after the first inauguration of Governor Seward as Chief Magistrate of New York State, says Harper's, Virus W. Smith, then and for many years afterward a potential man in the White party of Onondaga county, wrote to Mr. Thurlow Weed, requesting him to call upon the Governor, and ask him to appoint a certain man as Indian Agent for the Onondaga tribe of Indians. The person recommended by Mr. Smith was well known to Mr. Weed as one of those fussy, meddlesome, mal-adroit, pestilent fellows, nuisances to any party, whose only power is a power for mischief. He was therefore surprised at Mr. Smith's urging him for the position, and thought it could only have been done through ignorance of his character or misrepresentation on the part of others. Mr. Weed accordingly replied, expressing regret at Mr. Smith's request, in view of the objectionable character of the candidate, and begging him to suggest a more acceptable name. Next day Mr. Weed mentioned the matter to the Governor (who was equally cognizant of the man's character), and remarked that he had answered the letter, and that action for the present would be delayed. It was thought that this would bring Mr. Smith to Albany to look after the matter, as it did. On arriving he promptly called upon Mr. Weed, and exposed to him with him as to the character of his candidate. "Nevertheless," said he, "if you make it a point that he must have the place, why have it he must."

"Well, Mr. Weed, I am very anxious about it."

"But you know what a bad fellow he is."

"Can't help it; he's my man."

"But can't you give some reason for your urgency?"

"No," replied Mr. Smith; "I do not care to do that."

"But the Governor thinks bad of this fellow, and certainly some explanation is due to him."

"Well, it's something I don't wish to talk about."

"Do you really want to know?"

"Certainly."

"Then, if you insist upon it, I'll tell you. You know there are among the Onondagas two parties, the Christians and the pagans?"

"I am aware of it."

"Well, my man is a *leette* in favor of the Christians. The pagans have found that out, and what is more, they have agreed among themselves that the woman he comes among them they will kill him!"

"Virus," as he was popularly called in Onondaga, was concluded in the interest of humanity to withdraw his candidature, and there was no assassination by the pagans of Onondaga.

Beauty and Dress.

A clever writer says: "Providence meant woman to make the world beautiful as much as flowers and butterflies, and there is no sin in tasteful dress, but only in devoting to it too much money or too much time." This is a most sensible view, and is the true medium between the one extreme of straight and rigid simplicity and the devotion of the best energies of a lifetime to vanity and frivolity. But, after all, what is this rage for dress but an effort after the beautiful? The reason why the beautiful is not always the result, is because so many women are ignorant or merely imitative. They have no sense of fitness. The short wears what belongs to the tall, and brunettes sacrifice their natural beauty to look like blondes, and well they may, for blondes seem generally preferable.

Winter.

The North has broken loose. Down come the fierce winds with frost-teeth, and rush and riot around the house like myriad wolves! Ah, yes—beautiful winter! But what about poor drivers, out sixteen hours a day, on an omnibus, or crossing a wind-swept stage route? What about poor little errand boys, half-clad, without mittens, and holes in their shoes? What does a sewing-girl enjoy of the sublimities of winter up in her garret, with the thermometer at zero, and the coal all out, and clothes thin, and work scant, and friends far away, and a half-faded body too feeble to generate much heat?

Al, yes—send us what! says the engineer, snuggling in the machine-room, warm and sheltered. Fine weather! says the blacksmith, as his glowing forge; says the miner, as, like a martyr, he dives into the mine; says the rosy old fellow, made round and red with beef and port wine; says the spectacled matron, looking from her wind-tight parlor.

But what do crying children, hungry and half-clad, think? What do their parents, made cross by too little meat and too much whisky, think? What do you think, Robert, when you make a little burst on the road against the wind, it blowing two-twenty and you go two-seventeen? What do well-intentioned folks think that arranged in the mild afternoon to start before daylight the next morning, and wake to find the thermometer almost bottomless, but the start to be made, nevertheless?

What do tender-eyed Leahs think of the brilliant white snow, from every crystal of which the sun shoots sharp rays of light into her eyes, as if the ground was an infinite paper of pins and needles, and every breath of wind a Bowman shooting them into her eyes? What do school-boys think that sleep in the attic, and bounce out of bed at the breakfast call, to squeal in the pungent air, and rush into their clothes in one-tenth the time required in summer?

What do crooning hens and ostentatious roosters think as they huddle on the south-side of sheltering hedges, or barns, and stand hungry rather than be blown about by the tail-disheveling wind? And poor shivering horses, half-fed and wholly uncombed? and crumpled-up cows, that hump their backs and cover under any covert that will break the sharp thrusts of the despotie wind?

Ah, what splendid weather! say the sheep, cuddling together in walls of snow. S. J. should like that this subject should never be referred to between us. Please me in this, won't you? "P."

"Dear John, what is it?"

Susan had come in, and as she spoke she put her arm around her husband's neck and kissed him. He returned the kiss.

"Not now, Susan," he said huskily. "I will tell you some time."

"But you will come and eat some breakfast?"

"If you won't ask any more questions—yes."

The blow had been a severe one, and the effects of the shock did not quickly pass away. But John Ogden revived in time; and when he told to his wife the secret of his trouble on that unhappy night, he was prepared to give her a great and lasting joy by adding that he had made his last bet.—Ledger.

His Reasons.

Soon after the first inauguration of Governor Seward as Chief Magistrate of New York State, says Harper's, Virus W. Smith, then and for many years afterward a potential man in the White party of Onondaga county, wrote to Mr. Thurlow Weed, requesting him to call upon the Governor, and ask him to appoint a certain man as Indian Agent for the Onondaga tribe of Indians. The person recommended by Mr. Smith was well known to Mr. Weed as one of those fussy, meddlesome, mal-adroit, pestilent fellows, nuisances to any party, whose only power is a power for mischief. He was therefore surprised at Mr. Smith's urging him for the position, and thought it could only have been done through ignorance of his character or misrepresentation on the part of others. Mr. Weed accordingly replied, expressing regret at Mr. Smith's request, in view of the objectionable character of the candidate, and begging him to suggest a more acceptable name. Next day Mr. Weed mentioned the matter to the Governor (who was equally cognizant of the man's character), and remarked that he had answered the letter, and that action for the present would be delayed. It was thought that this would bring Mr. Smith to Albany to look after the matter, as it did. On arriving he promptly called upon Mr. Weed, and exposed to him with him as to the character of his candidate. "Nevertheless," said he, "if you make it a point that he must have the place, why have it he must."

"Well, Mr. Weed, I am very anxious about it."

"But you know what a bad fellow he is."

"Can't help it; he's my man."

"But can't you give some reason for your urgency?"

"No," replied Mr. Smith; "I do not care to do that."

"But the Governor thinks bad of this fellow, and certainly some explanation is due to him."

"Well, it's something I don't wish to talk about."

"Do you really want to know?"

"Certainly."

"Then, if you insist upon it, I'll tell you. You know there are among the Onondagas two parties, the Christians and the pagans?"

"I am aware of it."

"Well, my man is a *leette* in favor of the Christians. The pagans have found that out, and what is more, they have agreed among themselves that the woman he comes among them they will kill him!"

"Virus," as he was popularly called in Onondaga, was concluded in the interest of humanity to withdraw his candidature, and there was no assassination by the pagans of Onondaga.

Beauty and Dress.

A clever writer says: "Providence meant woman to make the world beautiful as much as flowers and butterflies, and there is no sin in tasteful dress, but only in devoting to it too much money or too much time." This is a most sensible view, and is the true medium between the one extreme of straight and rigid simplicity and the devotion of the best energies of a lifetime to vanity and frivolity. But, after all, what is this rage for dress but an effort after the beautiful? The reason why the beautiful is not always the result, is because so many women are ignorant or merely imitative. They have no sense of fitness. The short wears what belongs to the tall, and brunettes sacrifice their natural beauty to look like blondes, and well they may, for blondes seem generally preferable.

A Contented Farmer.

The Merrimack County (N. H.) Agricultural Society celebrated its semi-centennial anniversary, and at one of its meetings Geo. McCutchen said that thirty-two years ago he bought a farm of Gov. Colby for \$2,150. It was situated on that cold ridge of land which was as famous for cold as any except those farmed by Dr. Kana. He had killed the farm since, and it had paid. He was surprised to hear such gloomy talk as he had heard from men who had made fortunes on a farm. Such statements as were made by them needed analyzing. They might be truth, but they were not the whole truth. It is of no benefit to the farmer to always talk about oppression, for people know it is not true. There may be inequalities in taxation, but there is no oppression, and when he heard such talk, he asked himself, Would these same farmers change places with merchants or bankers, or the men shut up in the shops? He thought not. "Why, gentlemen," said the General, "I would not quit farming to be made Governor of New Hampshire." He once got uneasy and went West to Kansas. He found there unharvested crops late in November, a lack of barns, and almost of houses. He thought it a lazy, shiftless country. The men who emigrated thither from the East were workers, but their children were lazy. They would ride into the towns from their farms, and sit as if they were too lazy to dismount. Let grumblers go West; but, as for him, he never loved New Hampshire Hills so well as when he returned from that Western journey, and he felt like singing, "Give me back my native hills, rough and rugged though they be." "Cheer up, farmers," he said; "get out from under the clouds. If you can't get a living here, come up to New London hills; you can flourish there. We shall never get our rights by grumbling." The General, in reply to a question, said that when he bought his farm it cost fifteen tons of hay, and now fifty yards.

What do tender-eyed Leahs think of the brilliant white snow, from every crystal of which the sun shoots sharp rays of light into her eyes, as if the ground was an infinite paper of pins and needles, and every breath of wind a Bowman shooting them into her eyes? What do school-boys think that sleep in the attic, and bounce out of bed at the breakfast call, to squeal in the pungent air, and rush into their clothes in one-tenth the time required in summer?

What do crooning hens and ostentatious roosters think as they huddle on the south-side of sheltering hedges, or barns, and stand hungry rather than be blown about by the tail-disheveling wind? And poor shivering horses, half-fed and wholly uncombed? and crumpled-up cows, that hump their backs and cover under any covert that will break the sharp thrusts of the despotie wind?

Ah, what splendid weather! say the sheep, cuddling together in walls of snow. S. J. should like that this subject should never be referred to between us. Please me in this, won't you? "P."

"Dear John, what is it?"

Susan had come in, and as she spoke she put her arm around her husband's neck and kissed him. He returned the kiss.

"Not now, Susan," he said huskily. "I will tell you some time."

"But you will come and eat some breakfast?"

"If you won't ask any more questions—yes."

The blow had been a severe one, and the effects of the shock did not quickly pass away. But John Ogden revived in time; and when he told to his wife the secret of his trouble on that unhappy night, he was prepared to give her a great and lasting joy by adding that he had made his last bet.—Ledger.

His Reasons.

Soon after the first inauguration of Governor Seward as Chief Magistrate of New York State, says Harper's, Virus W. Smith, then and for many years afterward a potential man in the White party of Onondaga county, wrote to Mr. Thurlow Weed, requesting him to call upon the Governor, and ask him to appoint a certain man as Indian Agent for the Onondaga tribe of Indians. The person recommended by Mr. Smith was well known to Mr. Weed as one of those fussy, meddlesome, mal-adroit, pestilent fellows, nuisances to any party, whose only power is a power for mischief. He was therefore surprised at Mr. Smith's urging him for the position, and thought it could only have been done through ignorance of his character or misrepresentation on the part of others. Mr. Weed accordingly replied, expressing regret at Mr. Smith's request, in view of the objectionable character of the candidate, and begging him to suggest a more acceptable name. Next